796 182 619 571 462 [114] [222] [223] [Traditional Culture]

/52 cont./ largest possible part of the local group and a harmonious and efficient division of labor. Thanks to the fortunate coincidence whereby Castelnau passed through a Terêna community, near Miranda, in May 1845, exactly during preparations for those festivities, we can evaluate the high significance to the group of their "national holiday." The chronicler writes that "for a month the men had searched the forest for honey with which all the families were now busy preparing an alcoholic beverage, the soul of every festival."(88) Once the raw material had

88. 1949, II:303.

been gathered by the men, the job of preparing the drink fell to the women. Besides, by "all the houses women could be seen working at tasks of the most varied sort, but always for the same end."(89) And the function of these annual gatherings

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89. The chronicler goes on: "Some sew glass beads on pieces of striped cotton cloth, others cut and lay out the red feathers with which they make ornaments for the head; yet others sketch on their husbands' bodies delicate paintings, when they do not do this themselves." (1949, II:304.)

became very clear to us, in so far as they animate intratribal relations and preserve social solidarity, when we ascertained among the present-day Terêna that this is perhaps the only moment when the local groups manage to gather together all (or almost all) their members. Like the Oheokoti--which today coincides with Holy Week--, only the June festivals can gather the local group together, owing to the great spatial mobility